United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

2005

Environmental Assessment UT-020-2005-0045

West Onaqui Hazardous Fuels EA

Location:
Township 7 S Range 7 W Sections 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 22, 23, 26, 34, 36
Township 8 S Range 7 West Sections, 1, 11, 12
Tooele County

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1.0 Purpose & Need

1.1 Introduction

This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to analyze BLM managed land relative to the West Onaqui Hazardous Fuels Reduction (HFR) project. The EA is a site-specific analysis of potential impacts that could result with the implementation of a proposed action or alternative to the proposed action. The EA assists the BLM in project planning and ensuring compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and in making a determination as to whether any "significant" impacts could result from the analyzed actions. "Significance" is defined by NEPA and is found in regulation 40 CFR 1508.27. An EA provides evidence for determining whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a statement of "Finding of No Significant Impact" (FONSI). A Decision Record (DR), which includes a FONSI statement, is a document that briefly presents the reasons why implementations of the proposed action will not result in "significant" environmental impacts (effects) beyond those already addressed in the Pony Express Resource Management Plan (1990). If the decision maker determines that this project has "significant" impacts following the analysis in the EA, then an EIS would be prepared for the project. If not, a DR may be signed for the EA approving the alternative selected.

While wildland fires play an integral role in many forest and rangeland ecosystems, decades of efforts directed at extinguishing every fire that burned on public lands have disrupted the natural fire regimes that once existed. Moreover, as more and more communities develop and grow in areas that are adjacent to fire-prone lands in what is known as the *wildland urban interface*, wildland fires pose increasing threats to people and their property.

The **National Fire Plan (NFP)** (http://www.fireplan.gov) was developed in August 2000, following a landmark wildland fire season, with the intent of actively responding to severe wildland fires and their impacts to communities while ensuring sufficient firefighting capacity for the future. The NFP addresses five key points: Firefighting, Rehabilitation, Hazardous Fuels Reduction, Community Assistance, and Accountability.

1.2 Background

The SLFO is replying to the Presidential request on how to respond to past severe fire seasons. The SLFO is recommending and proposing a series of Hazardous Fuel (HF) and WUI projects to restore damaged landscapes and communities, increase investment to reduce fire risk, work directly with local communities at risk to improve community fire-fighting capacity and coordination, implement restoration projects, and expand education/risk mitigation efforts.

Implementation of HF and WUI projects intend to reduce the potential of wildland fire from burning across BLM managed lands, other federal, state, private, and tribal land–which place natural resources, human communities, and associated infrastructures at risk.

This EA focuses on the NEPA process in support of the NFP. The analysis area consists of 7,837 acres of juniper and sagebrush on BLM managed land located in Tooele County, which is depicted on the attached maps found in **Appendix A**.

1.3 Need for the Proposed Action

Juniper has invaded the historic sagebrush steppe ecosystem on the west slope of the Onaqui Mountains. The native forbs, grasses, and browse species are being replaced by juniper and cheatgrass in post-wildland fire events. A fuels treatment is needed in order to begin the process of restoring the integrity of the sagebrush steppe.

A multi-phased fuels treatment is needed in order to:

(1) Reduce juniper fuel loading and increase vegetation diversity to reduce the potential of high-intensity, large wildland fires,

(2) Produce safety areas for suppression resources, and

(3) Decrease fire return intervals and condition class within the Skull Valley community area.

1.4 Purpose of the Proposed Action

Objective 1: Remove 75-100% of all juniper trees within the previous treatment areas (juniper anchor chaining areas from the 1980's) for a total of 1,405 acres. There are 290 acres from a post wildfire rehabilitation effort in 1996.

Objective 2: Create fire breaks by removing 75-100% of juniper within 100' of the center line of 6 miles of roadway totaling 128 acres.

Objective 3: Increase juniper crown spacing to 40' (+/- 10') in areas outside of the fire breaks and previous chaining treatments for an approximate total of 2,000 acres. The treatment would blend with the surrounding vegetation by thinning the area in irregular mosaic patterns, which follow the natural contours of the landscape. About 25-50% of these areas may need seed.

1.5 Conformance with BLM Land Use Plans

The proposed action and alternatives described in this EA conform to the Pony Express Resource Management Plan (RMP) (1990) Decision One page 56, as amended by the SLFO Fire Management Plan (FMP) (1998) Alternative 2-Proposed Action/Integrated Fire/Resource Management Plan page seven. Although the proposed action and alternatives are not specifically mentioned in the plan, they are consistent with the objectives, goals, and decisions of the RMP and FMP.

This EA has been reviewed to determine if the proposed action conforms to the land use plan terms and conditions as required by 43 CFR 1610.5.

1.6 Relationship to Statutes, Regulations, or other Plans

The proposed action and alternatives are consistent with federal, state and local laws, regulations, and plans to the maximum extent possible. Other activity plans direct SLFO management in the analysis area including the Five Year Noxious Weed Control Plan (1996), Utah Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines for Healthy Rangelands (1997), Squarrose Knapweed Management Plan (1996), Utah Sage Grouse Conservation Plan Fourth Draft March 2001, Onaqui Mountain West Allotment Management Plan (1986), and the Onaqui Mountain Habitat Management Plan for the Onaqui wild horse herd.

1.7 Identification of Issues

Announcements were mailed to interested individuals and organizations starting in September of 2004. A field trip involved the SLFO ID Team and a Habitat Biologist from Utah Division of Wildlife Resources for the Central Region on June 1, 2005.

Environmental notification was posted on the SLFO Environmental Notification Bulletin Board May 10, 2005.

Based on an interdisciplinary review the following issues may be impacted by the proposed action:

- Cultural Resources
- Invasive Nonnative Species
- Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines/Vegetation
- Livestock Grazing
- Woodland/Forestry
- Wildlife including Special Status Species
- Soil
- Fuels/Fire Management
- Wild Horses and Burros

2.0 Description of Alternatives Including Proposed Action

2.1 Introduction

This EA focuses on the proposed action and no action alternatives. No additional alternatives where suggested by the public or SLFO Specialists. The no action alternative is considered and analyzed to provide a baseline for comparison of the impacts of the proposed action.

2.2 Alternative A – Proposed Action/Fuels Treatment

The proposed treatment would begin in 2005 and end in 2010. Maintenance may be required and could occur during the next 10 years. The analysis area is approximately 7,837 acres.

Objective 1 would be accomplished utilizing three different treatment types. The treatments in these areas would begin in the fall of 2005 and end in spring 2006. The effectiveness of each treatment type would be tested and results would be utilized in the development of future projects. The three treatment types include the following:

1. Bullhog on approximately 800 acres,
2. Hand-thinning juniper trees with chainsaws on approximately 200 acres, and
3. Brush crunching or using a roller chopper on approximately 400 acres.

Objective 2 would be accomplished utilizing the bullhog. The treatment is scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2007.

Objective 3 would be accomplished utilizing the bullhog. Approximately 1,000 acres would be treated during the fall of 2007 into the spring 2008. An additional 1,000 acres is scheduled to occur from the fall of 2009 to the spring of 2010.

The bullhog is a self propelled, tracked or rubber-tired, brush cutting piece of forestry equipment with carbide tipped cutters mounted on a rotary drum. The cutting head reduces wood and brush quickly into shredded material leaving a layer of mulch-like material. Bullhog sizes range from 13,000 pounds up to 42,000 pounds and 10'long by 6' wide up to 20' long and 10' wide.

The bullhog would mulch selected juniper trees while avoiding Pinyon. Root material would not be disturbed.

The chainsaw would cut juniper at ground level, trees would then be cut no longer than 4', and then scattered across the area to avoid heavy accumulations of fuel.

The brush cruncher and roller chopper are implements which are pulled behind rubber tire or tracked agricultural tractors or dozers. Blades are often attached to the tractor to push the juniper over, and then the implements chop and crush trees as the equipment is pulled over the toppled trees. The implements vary in size from 20,000 up to 30,000 pounds and have either one or two drums which vary from 8' up to 15' wide and from 20 up to 72" in diameter. Each drum has either offset or parallel cutting blades which do the chopping as it is pulled.

Certified weed free seed would be applied if needed to accomplish objective 3, see Seed Species List in **Appendix B**. The use of a rangeland drill is the preferred seeding treatment method after the bullhog has mulched selected trees. Aerial or other ground broadcast treatments may also be

used. Seeding would be dependant upon weather conditions and when soil moisture is higher; preferably fall months.

Pre and post treatment fuels monitoring would occur, see West Onaqui Baseline Monitoring Data in **Appendix C**. The treatment would also be monitored for invasion of noxious or invasive weeds. Weeds would be managed in accordance with the SLFO LUP and the Noxious Weed Act of Oct. 2004.

Use of access routes by numerous pieces of heavy equipment and support vehicles, especially during extreme wet or dry conditions, may deepen rutting and/or widen existing dirt roads in the area. Ground operations would cease if conditions could lead to considerable damage from vehicles.

New routes created during project work by vehicles and/or equipment would be rehabilitated to prevent cross-country use by off-highway vehicle (OHV) users. Some routes may require the installation of "closed to motorized vehicles" signs to prevent OHV use until the evidence of tire tracks are obscured by vegetation cover.

Treatments along the route found in T 8 S, R 7 W, sections 1, 11, & 12 would leave juniper trees around existing dispersed camping sites. The 100' foot removal around the route would be feathered to decrease the visual impact of the treatment to the public accessing the route.

The proposed project would not:

- Adversely affect public health and safety.
- Adversely affect unique geographic or ecological characteristics.
- Have highly controversial environmental effects.
- Have highly uncertain environmental effects or involve unique/unknown environmental risks.
- Establish precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about a future consideration with significant environmental effects.
- Relate to other actions with individually insignificant environmental effects but significant cumulative environmental effects.
- Adversely affect properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
- Adversely affect a listed or proposed Threatened or Endangered Species or critical habitat.
- Require further compliance with Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management), Executive Order 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), or the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act.
- Threaten to violate a Federal, State, local or Tribal law.

**Dates are subject to change due to weather and equipment related issues.*
***The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources has agreed to purchase and apply the seed.*

2.3 Alternative B – No Action
There would be no fuels treatment completed on the west side of the Onaqui Mountains. Management would continue as directed under the Pony Express RMP (1990), as amended by the SLFO FMP (1998).

3.0 Affected Environment

3.1 Introduction
This chapter presents the affected environment of impact areas as identified by the Interdisciplinary Team Analysis Record Checklist in **Appendix D**. This chapter provides the relevant environmental components for comparison of impacts/consequences in section four.

3.2 General Setting
The West Onaqui project area is located on the west slope of the Onaqui Mountains. The area is used for livestock grazing and wildlife habitat including a wild horse herd.

3.3 Resource/Issues Brought Forward for Analysis

3.3.1 Critical Elements/Other Resources of the Human Environment

3.3.2 Cultural Resources
Less than ten percent of the West Onaqui area has been inventoried for cultural resources. Existing inventories indicate that a moderate density of prehistoric remains may be present in the affect environment. Historic remains associated Pony Express Overland Stage Route are expected in the south end of the proposed project area.

3.3.3 Invasive Nonnative Species
A small amount of cheatgrass exists in the proposed project area. Cheatgrass creates an alarmingly unnatural fire regime.

3.3.4 Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines/Vegetation
The Onaqui Mountain West and South Skull Valley allotments are not meeting rangeland health standards due to juniper encroachment along the western benches of the Onaqui Mountains. The following information was collected in 1999:

Rangeland Health Assessment Information								
	Soil Stability	Watershed Function	Riparian PFC (Proper Functioning Condition)	Biotic Integrity	Water Quality	Allotment Meeting the Standards	Reason for Allotment not Meeting the Standards	Apparent Trend
Onaqui Mtn West	At Risk	At Risk	Delle Spring Skull Faust Canyon	At Risk	N/A	No	This allotment isn't functioning correctly due to juniper encroachment. The closed canopy stand of juniper is closing out other important vegetation.	Static

Rangeland Health Assessment Information								
	Soil Stability	Watershed Function	Riparian PFC (Proper Functioning Condition)	Biotic Integrity	Water Quality	Allotment Meeting the Standards	Reason for Allotment not Meeting the Standards	Apparent Trend
South Skull Valley	At Risk	At Risk	No riparian on the South Skull Valley allotment	Not Intact	N/A	No	This allotment is 'At Risk" to cheatgrass invasion and juniper encroachment.	Static

** At Risk – Rangelands that have a reversible loss in productive capability and increased vulnerability to irreversible degradation based upon an evaluation of current conditions of the soil and ecological process (NRC 1994). At risk designation may point out the need for additional information to better quantify the functional status of an attribute. This is a term for Rangeland Health of Uplands.*

The sites observed in 1999 within the analysis area exhibit an intensity of juniper proliferation; as such it has begun to reduce the amount and vigor of native grasses and sagebrush. This site is also 'At Risk' to cheatgrass invasion with an abundance of that species found to be present in the understory of juniper stands.

3.3.5 Livestock Grazing

Livestock grazing within the analysis area is authorized based on the following table:

Grazing Use							
Allotment Name	**Livestock #**	**Livestock Type**	**Permittees AUMs**	**Active Use AUMs**	**Suspended use AUMs**	**Exchange of Use (#/AUMs)**	**Season of Use (100%PL)**
South Skull Valley (04035)	723	cattle	10,332	4302	1466	167/659	11/1 to 4/15
South Skull Valley (04035)	3800	sheep	4522	4522	NA	NA	11/1 to4/30
Onaqui Mountain West (04057)	228	cattle	1,146	1,146	NA	NA	5/16 to 10/15
Sheep Trail (04000)	sheep & cattle	as applied for	3200	as needed	NA	NA	as needed

Several common themes (from rangeland health surveys completed in the South Skull Valley and Onaqui Mountain West allotments) were noted: functional structural groups were consistently rated in the moderate to extreme categories due to the amount of juniper described for the historic plant community. The presence of juniper is significantly more in distribution and density. These findings led the inter-disciplinary team to rate this site as 'functioning-at-risk' because of juniper encroachment and erosion is occurring at an accelerated rate.

Juniper encroachment was identified in the Onaqui Mountain West AMP (1986). The resource issues associated with juniper encroachment were identical to those identified through the rangeland health assessments. The AMP identifies "decreasing juniper composition by 90% through mechanical or chemical treatment" as an objective for this area. Removing juniper would increase grasses, forbs, and shrubs, therefore improving wildlife forage, decreasing surface runoff and erosion, while achieving an overall improvement to watershed conditions.

**Functioning at Risk – Are riparian-wetland area which may possess some or even most of the elements in the definition of Proper Functional Condition, but at least one of its attributes/processes gives it a high probability of degradation with relatively high flow events. This is usually a riparian term.*

3.3.6 Woodland/Forestry

Historically, the analysis area had a more diverse juniper/pinion pine/sagebrush savannah than what exists today. Because of encroachment by juniper, the historical composition of the area has changed to resemble a closed state. This closed state makes the area more susceptible to catastrophic wildland fire events.

3.3.7 Wildlife including Special Status Animal Species

The northern portion of the analysis area contains habitat identified as crucial mule deer winter range. The sage brush and pinion/juniper communities provide year round and seasonal habitat for a variety of neotropical migratory and resident songbirds. Mammal species likely to be found include coyote, badger, black-tailed jackrabbit, desert and mountain cottontails, and a variety of small mammals (mice and kangaroo rats). Bat species that may be found roosting and or foraging in the area include western small-footed myotis, silver-haired bat, big brown bat, western pipistrelle, Brazilian free-tailed bat, and Townsend's big-eared bat. No known raptor nests exist within the analysis area. However, many raptor species may use the area for foraging and roosting. These include long and short-eared owls, red-tailed hawk, Swainson's hawk, ferruginous hawk, golden eagle, peregrine and prairie falcon, rough-legged hawk (winter only) and bald eagles (winter only).

Special status species potentially found in the analysis area include bald eagle, Brazilian free-tailed bat, Townsend's big-eared bat, ferruginous hawk, milksnake, peregrine falcon, short-eared owl, and Swainson's hawk.

3.3.8 Soils

Soil types within the analysis area are Borvant gravelly loam or Lundy/Lodar. Range sites included within these soil types are Upland Shallow loam and Upland Shallow Hardpan. Soils within the analysis area are typically gravelly sandy loam to clay loam in texture. The analysis area fits the NRCS soils survey (NRCS 2000) description of the Hiko Peak inclusions contained within the Borvant soil map unit. The Hiko Peak inclusion is very deep and located on the lower fan remnants.

The Onaqui Mountain West AMP and the 1999 Rangeland Health Assessment described impacts to soils due to juniper encroachment in this area. The AMP described soils as being excessively eroded within the juniper sites. The Rangeland Health Assessment stated that soil erosion issues are associated with the lack of vegetation cover within the juniper invasion sites. The AMP concluded that the management strategy to reduce the excessive erosion would be to treat juniper "mechanically or chemically".

3.3.9 Fuels/Fire Management

Fuels are presently in fire regime III condition class 3 [Fire Regime Condition Class (FRCC) is an interagency, standardized tool for determining the degree of departure from reference condition vegetation, fuels and disturbance regimes. Assessing FRCC can help guide management objectives and set priorities for treatments].

The risk of catastrophic fast-moving wildland fire is present in the analysis area.

3.3.10 Wild Horses and Burros

Currently, wild horses use the area for foraging and security cover. There are no burros in this area. The existing state of the vegetation, namely the extensive juniper cover, has reduced the amount of available forage for horses. This has caused horses to move to other areas to find forage. If a catastrophic wildland fire were to occur in this area, it would deplete wild horse forage.

4.0 Environmental Impacts

4.1 Introduction
Below are the issues and resources to be analyzed. Because all known mitigating measures have been included in the proposed action and alternative, the environmental consequences described below are unavoidable.

4.2. Alternative A – Proposed Action/Fuels Treatment

4.2.1 Cultural Resources
A Class III cultural resource inventory would be completed to locate historic properties prior to any ground disturbance. Adverse effects to historic properties will be avoided or mitigated.

4.2.2 Invasive Nonnative Species
The bullhog would eliminate 3,533 acres of invasive juniper within the project area. Mulching and seeding would reduce the opportunity for invasive annual weeds and provide for a diverse plant community.

Establishing natives/nonnative perennial plant species would prevent the spread of noxious weeds. Certified weed free seed used in the seed mixture would also discourage weed establishment on 500-1000 acres in the analysis area.

Possible weed infestation would be managed with in accordance with the SLFO LUP, Noxious Weed Act of 2004, and the Final EIS Vegetation Treatment on BLM Lands in 13 Western States.

4.2.3 Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines
The proposed action would have a positive impact to rangeland health standards for the analysis area. Juniper encroachment would be reduced on up to 75%, which would allow the historical native community of sagebrush and grass on 4,533 acres.

4.2.4 Livestock Grazing
Livestock grazing would occur as permitted. All areas of treatment would receive two years of non-use from grazing following any reseeding efforts. This would require coordination with affected permittees. Areas of treatment would be fenced or agreements would be reached with permittees for non-use within the area of the treatment on the affected allotments. If agreements could not be reached with affected permittees or fencing is not completed than livestock grazing would not be authorized in within treatment areas that would be reseeded.

4.2.5 Woodland/Forestry
Removing juniper would allow the native plant community to move towards a more diverse structure. The trees that remain in the area, following the treatment, should in general be healthier due to the removal of competition. There could be short-term adverse impacts due to damage to remaining foliage (bruising and tearing) and roots (compaction) caused during the implementation. These short-term impacts would however be offset by the long-term improvement in the diversity of the forest community.

4.2.6 Wildlife including Special Status Animal Species
In general, wildlife species using the area would be disrupted by the treatment activities. Most species are highly mobile and would relocate to other areas. This disruption would be short-term

and temporary with the impacted species returning to normal activity patterns upon project completion.

The project once implemented would improve crucial winter range for mule deer by providing greater amounts of forage and improved forage quality. The remaining juniper would continue to provide thermal cover. Treatments would be timed to avoid the nesting season and chick rearing seasons for neotropical migratory and resident songbirds. Increased vegetation diversity would likely result in increased insect diversity. These insects serve as prey for many songbirds and all bat species. The removal of juniper would result in the loss of nesting and roosting areas for songbirds however they would relocate to other areas of suitable nesting habitat. The project would not likely result in decreased nest success or survival. The increased plant community diversity would benefit small mammal populations which are typically food limited. Small mammal populations should increase thereby benefiting raptors, predatory mammals, and reptiles.

4.2.7 Soils

The proposed vegetation treatment would have a positive impact on soils within the analysis area by increasing soil cover (litter and vegetation component).

It is anticipated that the treatment of juniper on this site would release the necessary vegetation to allow for adequate cover of the soils for protection from surface runoff.

4.2.8 Fuels/Fire Management

The treatments would provide disturbance under controlled conditions, consequently protecting natural resources and reducing the risk of catastrophic fast-moving wildland fire. Fuels would be managed to reduce the risk of property damage, high intensity wildfires, and would reduce the potential for large wildland fire growth.

A lower fire hazard would directly reduce the risk to the sagebrush steppe ecosystem while increasing the ability of initial attack suppression forces to control wildland fire more quickly, safely, and cost efficiently.

Reducing fuels would move the area into condition class 2; fire would burn in a closer to natural pattern instead of stand replacement levels.

4.2.9 Wild Horses

There would be a short-term adverse impact due to the temporary displacement of wild horses from the area during the application of the proposed action. This adverse effect would be transitory in nature and would be far outweighed by the net increase in available forage for the wild horse herd.

4.2.10 Mitigation Measures

If archaeological mitigation measures are needed the SLFO will consult with the Utah SHPO.

A Class III cultural resource inventory will be completed to locate historic properties prior to any ground disturbance. Adverse effects to historic properties will be avoided through project design.

4.2.11 Residual Impacts
As a result of Alternative A the visual esthetics would be enhanced with mosaic patterns of different plant communities providing color, texture, and contrast. The area would be green in the spring and amber in the late summer and fall.

4.2.12 Cumulative Affects
Wildland fire within the analysis area has a potential of burning a high number of acres annually. This fuels treatments would greatly reduce and discourage the number of acres burned annually and encourage proactive management of resource values in the area.

Manipulating vegetation within the analysis area could directly influence the success of BLM meeting Utah's Standards for Rangeland Health. Scheduled monitoring could ensure proper management of rangeland and watershed resources within the analysis area.

Overall, the fuels reduction project would protect the sagebrush steppe ecosystem.
There are no other activities/actions that are presently known by the BLM that have been proposed or are likely to occur on USFS, the State of Utah, DOD, reservations, refuges, or private lands adjacent or near to the analysis area.

4.3 Alternative B – No Action/Continuation of Current Management

4.3.1 Cultural Resources
Fuel loads would continue to increase thereby increasing the intensity of wildfire. Intense wildfires would be detrimental to prehistoric resources, which may have only experienced regular wildfire regimes in the past. Moreover, wooden and stone historic structures associated with the Pony Express Overland Stage route would be more difficult to protect.

4.3.2 Invasive Nonnative Species
The dense juniper stands would remain the same and continue to encroach into the sagebrush steppe. Cheatgrass would continue to proliferate. If a wildland fire occurred the area could become a cheatgrass monoculture in lieu of juniper and sagebrush (perpetuating the occurrence of wildfire). Other undesirable species could also invade the site, such as Knapweed.

4.3.3 Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines/Vegetation
Rangeland Health would remain as analyzed and described in the Onaqui Mountain West AMP and the Onaqui Mountain West Rangeland Health Assessment. The area would remain in an "At Risk" condition due to the juniper encroachment and the associated soil erosion occurring within juniper areas.

4.3.4 Livestock Grazing
Livestock would provide fine fuel reduction in the analysis area, but would be ineffective in managing the large fuels. Livestock uses on the allotment would continue as allowed in the terms and conditions of the existing permits–there would be no changes in number or season.

4.3.5 Woodland/Forestry
The lack of a fuels treatment in this area would allow for the continued encroachment of juniper, therefore leading to the eventual displacement of other native species. The tight canopy could also lead the area to an increased potential for a catastrophic event, such as wildland fire, the spread of disease, and/or insect infestation. If an incident such as this were to occur, the lack of an understory would encourage the encroachment of cheatgrass and other undesirable species.

4.3.6 Wildlife including Special Status Animal Species
Population levels and population trends would remain as they currently are. Crucial deer winter range would not be improved. Plant diversity would remain low along with associated insect diversity. There would not be temporary disturbance to wildlife from brush crunching and bull hog operations.

4.3.7 Soils
Soil conditions would remain as described in the Onaqui Mountain West AMP and the Onaqui Mountain West Rangeland Health Assessment. Excessive erosion would continue within the juniper areas due to the lack of vegetation cover from grasses and shrubs.

4.3.8 Fuels/Fire Management
The area would remain in condition class 3 in fire regime III. The potential for large destructive wildfires would remain high. The threat to the sagebrush steppe ecosystem would also remain high. Fire prevention would rely on reactionary fire fighting techniques to battle large or small-scale fires in the area.

Fuel loading would continue and increase fire danger. If a wildland fire was to occur in the area cheatgrass and other weeds may proliferate, therefore increasing fire return intervals.

4.3.9 Wild Horses and Burros
The current circumstances would persist and the available forage to horses would continue to decrease. In the event of a catastrophic wildland fire, a large portion of the area would become unusable by the wild horse population. This could lead to extreme hardship on the wild horse herd and may result in unnecessary death or injury to members of this population.

4.3.10 Mitigation Measures
No mitigation measures have been identified for the No Action/Continuation of Current Management.

4.3.11 Cumulative Impacts
Suppression efforts would remain the same. Fuel loading would continue to increase, increasing fire danger. If a wildland fire were to occur in the area, cheatgrass and other weeds may proliferate therefore, increasing fire return intervals.

As vegetation remains untreated, hazardous fuels would increase and remain at risk to catastrophic wildfire. The risk to resource values would remain high with the increase in hazardous fuels. Community members and private landowners may accomplish fire hazard reduction work independently of BLM actions. However, the prevalence of heavy fuel loading on BLM land in the area would allow a large fire hazard to remain unchecked.

5.0 CONSULTATION & COORDINATION

5.1 Introduction

The issue identification section of Chapter 1 identifies those issues analyzed in Chapter 4. **Appendix D** provides the list of preparers and the issues identified as a potential impact. These issues were identified through the public and agency involvement process described in sections 5.2 below.

5.2 List of all Persons, Agencies, & Organizations Consulted for Purposes of this EA

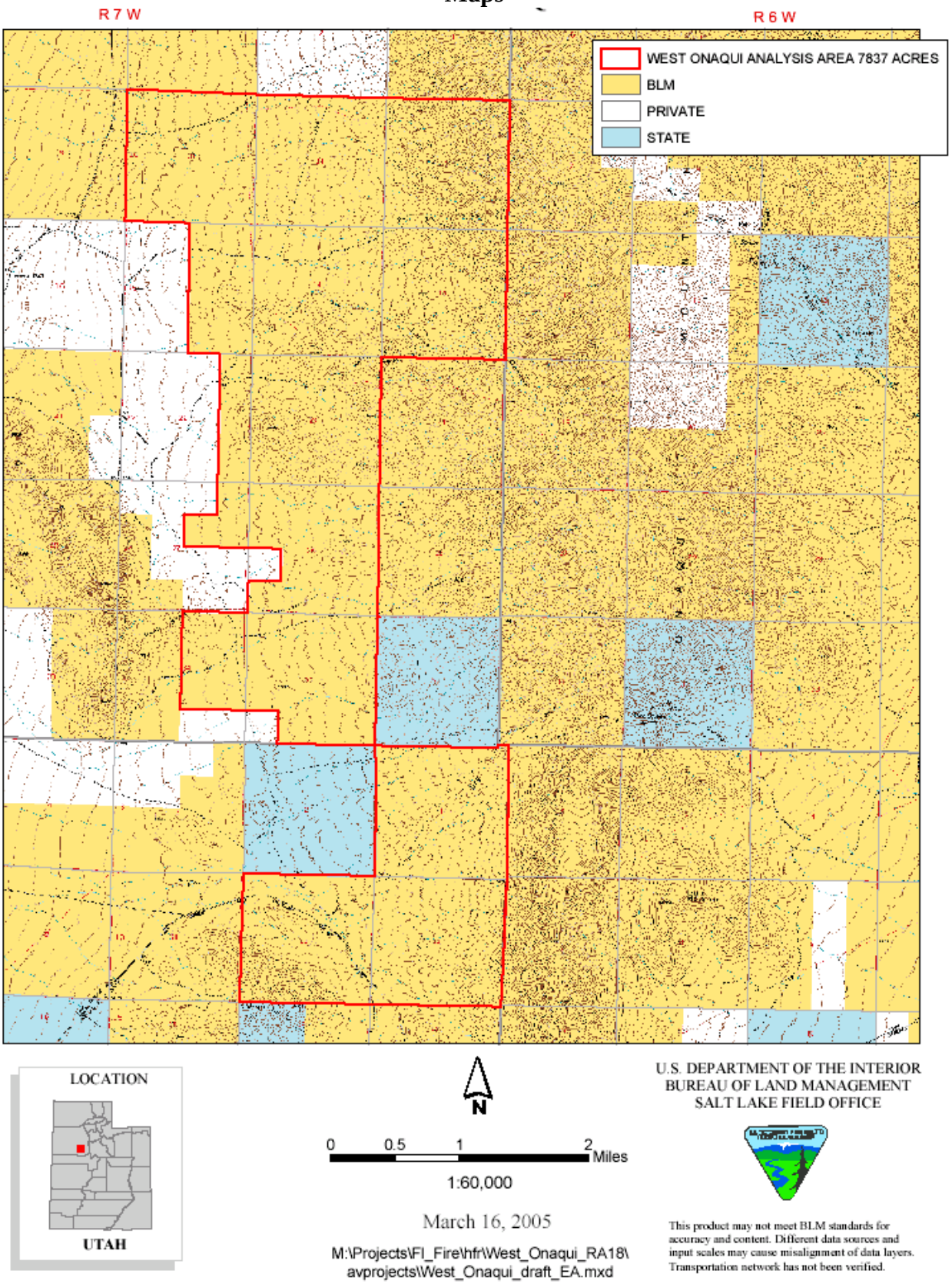
Name	Purpose & Authorities for Consultation or Coordination	Findings & Conclusions
Utah State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)	Consultation for undertakings, as required by the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (16 USC 470)	SHPO receives quarterly reports, under a State Protocol Agreement, concerning all WUI and HF activities in lieu of normal NHPA consultation.
Tribes Consulted: Goshute Reservation, Skull Valley Gosiutes, Ute, and Paiute	Consultation as required by the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (42 USC 1996) and NHPA (16 USC 470)	A letter was sent on June 6, 2005 informing the tribes about this project. The Goshute Reservation sent a letter dated July 19, 2005 stating that they did not have objections to this project. The other tribes have not responded to the letter.
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR)	Consult with UDWR as the agency with expertise on impacts on game species and needed seeded species, if any.	Comments incorporated into Chapters 3 and 4.
Outback Therapeutic Expeditions, LLC	NEPA	This organization uses the southern portion of the area. The project would not remove the trees needed by this organization for cover. The SLFO would avoid their camping areas.

Issue identification letters, describing the proposed action, were sent to the following August 10, 2005:

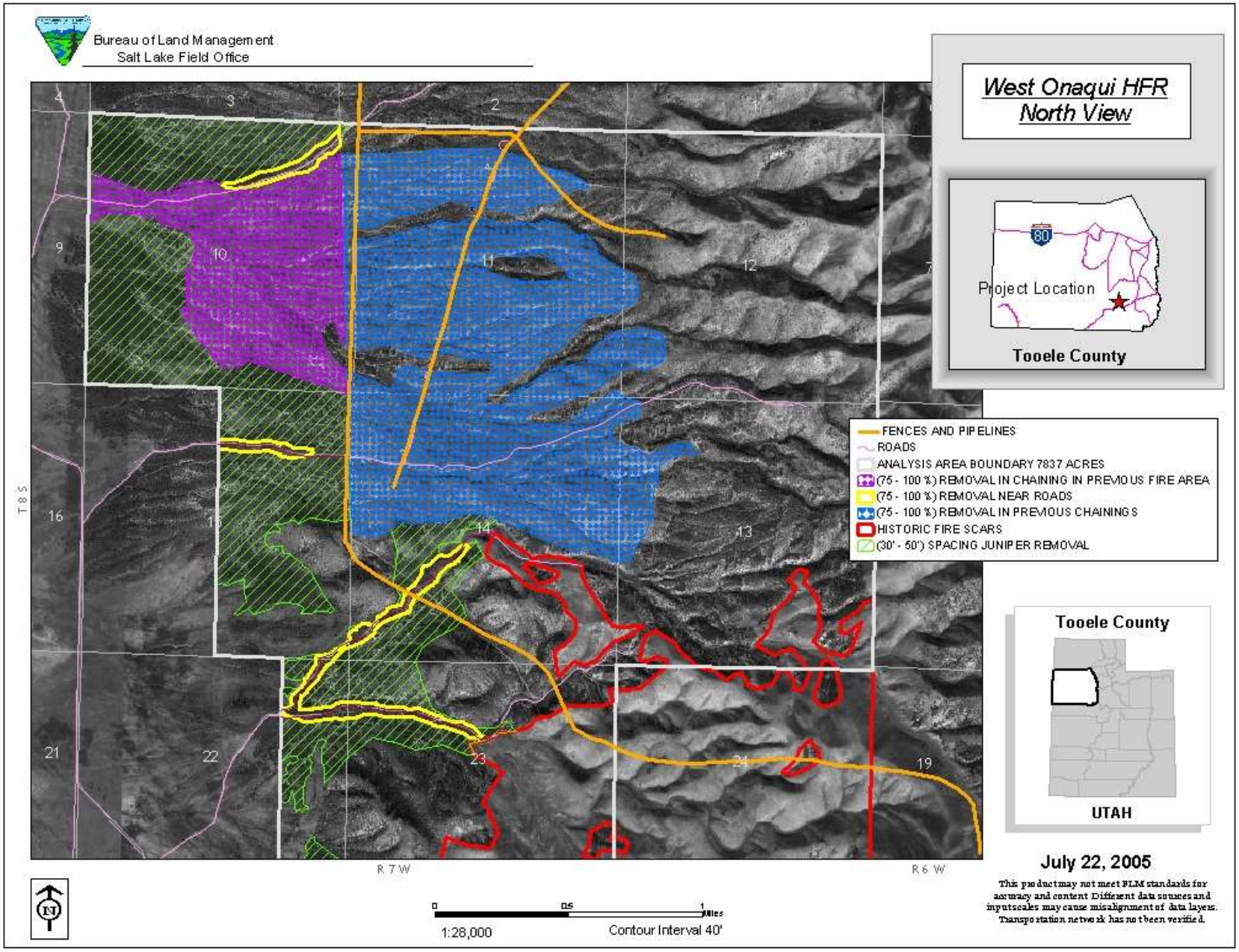
Last Name	Job Title	Company/Contact	City	ST	Zip
Sakaguchi	Habitat Manager	Central Region DWR	Springville	UT	84663
Becker	Habitat Biologist	Central Region DWR	Springville	UT	84663
Bishop	Congressman		Ogden	UT	84401
		USDA Service Center	Tooele	UT	84074
Gardener	Area Manager, FF&SL		Salt Lake City	UT	84114-5703
		Dept of Natural Resources	Salt Lake City	UT	84114-6201
Bennett	Senator		Salt Lake City	UT	84138
Dean			Provo	UT	84606
Block		SUWA	Salt Lake City	UT	84105
Tanner		Utah Grazing Association	Grouse Creek	UT	84313
Arnold	Fire Warden		Tooele	UT	84074
		Tooele County Commission	Tooele	UT	84074
Wentlender	Fire Management Officer	Uinta National Forest	Provo	UT	84601
Corbin	Fire Ecologist	Wasatch-Cache NF	Ogden	UT	84401
Duncan	Fuels Specialist	Uinta NF	Provo	UT	84601

Tonioli	Fire Management Officer	Wasatch-Cache NF	Ogden	UT	84401
Megown	Biologist	USF&WS	West Valley City	UT	84119
Schwager	Biologist	USF&WS	West Valley City	UT	84119
Hawthorne	Executive Director	Utah Shared Access Alliance	Payson	UT	84651
Bednarz		Outback Therapeutic Expeditions, LLC	LEHI	UT	84043
Carter		Western Watersheds	Mendon	UT	84325
Eckenstam		Tooele Chapter	Tooele	UT	84074
	Editor	Tooele Transcript Bulletin	Tooele	UT	84074
Pannunzio		Tooele Chapter	Tooele	UT	84074
Hopkin		Utah Department of Agriculture	Salt Lake City	UT	84114-6500
Palmer		Utah State Cooperative Ext	Tooele	UT	84074
Robinson		Ensign Ranches	Salt Lake City	UT	84111
	Commander, US Army	Dugway Proving Ground	Dugway	UT	84022-5000
Suarez	ESQ	Pacific Legal Foundation	Sacramento	CA	95834
		Forest Guardians	Santa Fe	NM	87501
Robinson		AJR-L.C.,CFR-CR, L.C & VAR, L.C.	North Salt Lake	UT	84054
Young			Evanston	WY	82931
		B & E Development	Salt Lake City	UT	84128-2508
Davis			Tooele	UT	84087
Lee			Vernon	UT	84080-9702
		Russell Land & Livestock	Tooele	UT	84074-2716
Russell			Stockton	UT	84071-9701

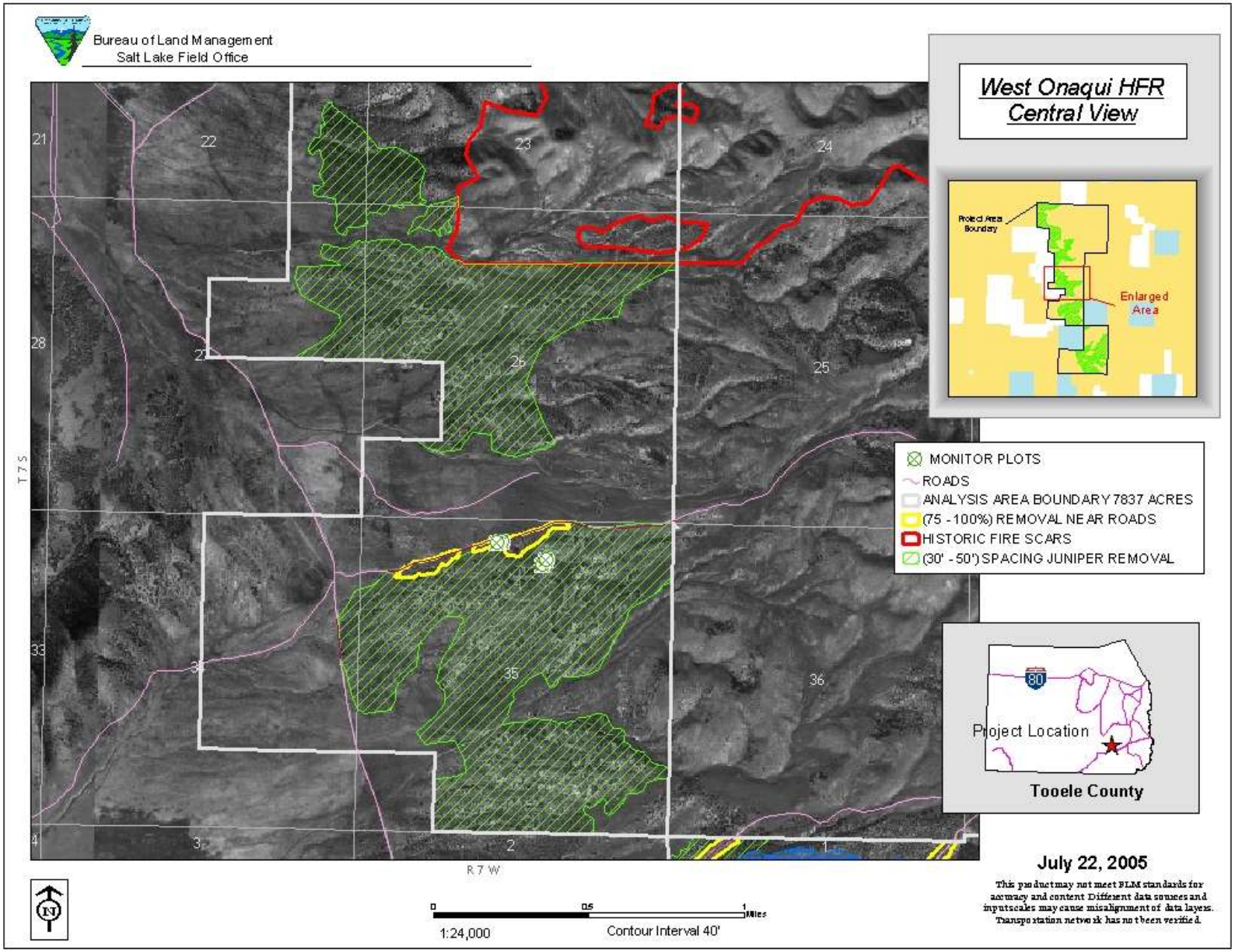
Appendix A
Maps



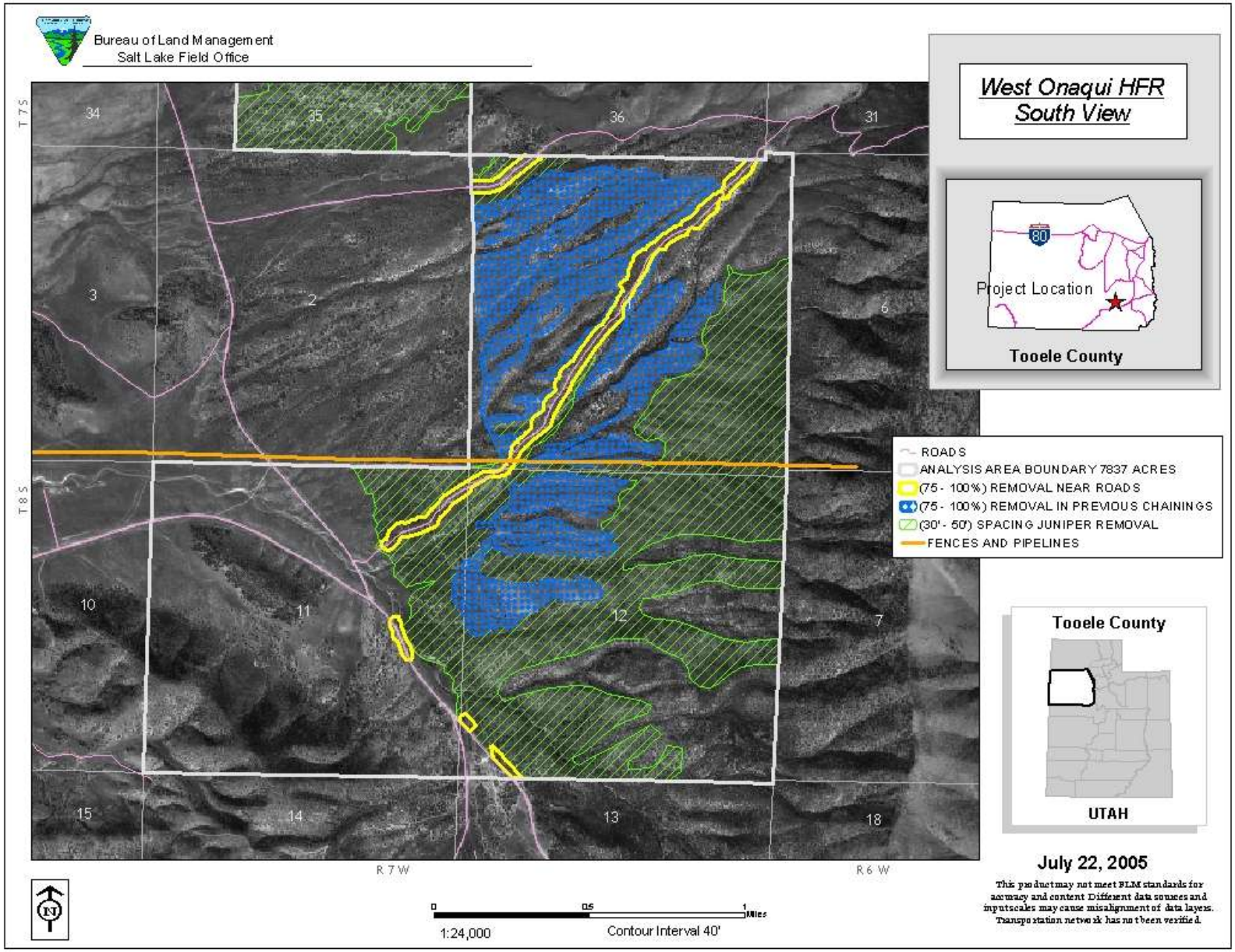
North View


Bureau of Land Management
Salt Lake Field Office
West Onaqui HFR
North View
Project Location
80
Tooele County
FENCES AND PIPELINES
ROADS
ANALYSIS AREA BOUNDARY 7837 ACRES
(75 - 100 %) REMOVAL IN CHAINING IN PREVIOUS FIRE AREA
(75 - 100 %) REMOVAL NEAR ROADS
(75 - 100 %) REMOVAL IN PREVIOUS CHAININGS
HISTORIC FIRE SCARS
(30' - 50') SPACING JUNIPER REMOVAL
Tooele County
UTAH
July 22, 2005
This product may not meet BLM standards for accuracy and content. Different data sources and input scales may cause misalignment of data layers. Transportation network has not been verified.
T 8 S
R 7 W
R 6 W
1:28,000
Contour Interval 40'

Central View



South View


Bureau of Land Management
Salt Lake Field Office
West Onaqui HFR
South View
Project Location
80
Tooele County
ROADS
ANALYSIS AREA BOUNDARY 7837 ACRES
(75 - 100%) REMOVAL NEAR ROADS
(75 - 100%) REMOVAL IN PREVIOUS CHAININGS
(30' - 50') SPACING JUNIPER REMOVAL
FENCES AND PIPELINES
Tooele County
UTAH
July 22, 2005
This product may not meet BLM standards for accuracy and content. Different data sources and input scales may cause misalignment of data layers. Transportation network has not been verified.
T 7 S
T 8 S
R 7 W
R 6 W
34
35
36
31
3
2
6
10
11
12
7
15
14
13
18
1:24,000
Contour Interval 40'

Appendix B
Seed Species List

Grass	N/I*	Forbs	N/I*	Browse	N/I*
Bottlebrush Squirreltail	N	Yellow Sweetclover	I	Four-wing Saltbrush	N
Russian Wild Rye	I	Ladak Alfalfa	I	Antelope Bitterbrush	N
Western Wheatgrass	N	Sainfoin	N	Sagebrush	N
Indian Ricegrass	N	Globemallow	N	Gardner Saltbrush	N
Siberian Wheat Grass	I	Kochia, Forage	I		
Thickspike Wheatgrass	N	Lewis Flax	N		
Basin Wild Rye	N	Small burnet	I		
Snake River Wheat Grass	N	Western Yarrow	N		
Paiute Orchardgrass	I				

Native vs. Introduced

Appendix C
Baseline Monitoring Data

Baseline data for juniper woodland would be collected before project implementation. This vegetation data may be inserted in to this document at a later date.

Appendix D
Interdisciplinary Team Analysis Record Checklist

Project Title: West Onaqui HF EA
NEPA Log Number: UT-020-2005-0045
File/Serial Number: 2823 JQ RA19
Project Leader: Brook Chadwick/Ambur Mathews
Plan Decision/Objective: Hazardous Fuel Reduction
Date of Public Notification: May 9, 2005

FOR EAs/CXs: NP: not present; NI: resource/use present but not impacted; PI: potentially impacted

	Resource	Date Reviewed	Signature	Review Comments PIs require further analysis
CRITICAL ELEMENTS				
PI	Invasive Nonnative Species Kidd			See sections 3.0 Affected Environment and 4.0 Environmental Impacts for discussion.
OTHER RESOURCES / CONCERNS				
PI	Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines/Vegetation Gates			See sections 3.0 Affected Environment and 4.0 Environmental Impacts for discussion.
PI	Livestock Grazing Redington and Gates			See sections 3.0 Affected Environment and 4.0 Environmental Impacts for discussion.
PI	Woodland/Forestry Hansen			See sections 3.0 Affected Environment and 4.0 Environmental Impacts for discussion.
PI	Wildlife including Special Status Species Swilling			No BLM sensitive plant species were found. See sections 3.0 Affected Environment and 4.0 Environmental Impacts for discussion on Fish and Wildlife including Special Status Animal Species
PI	Soils Gates			See sections 3.0 Affected Environment and 4.0 Environmental Impacts for discussion.
PI	Fuels/Fire Management Chadwick/Washington			See sections 3.0 Affected Environment and 4.0 Environmental Impacts for discussion.
PI	Wild Horses and Burros Hansen			See sections 3.0 Affected Environment and 4.0 Environmental Impacts for discussion.

Final Review:

Reviewer Title	Date	Signature	Review Comments
NEPA/Environmental Coordinator			
Manager			